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# A Producer Perspective on Using Reproductive Technologies

Chad Blair  
*Blair Bros. LLC*

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## A Producer Perspective on Using Reproductive Technologies

Chad Blair  
 Blair Brothers Angus Ranch  
 Vale, SD

## Blair Brothers Angus Ranch



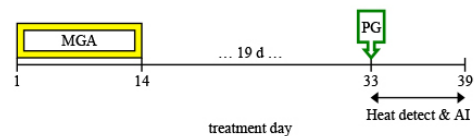
## Blair Brothers Angus Ranch

- 1,200 mother cows
- 400-500 bred heifers
- Sell approximately 350-500 bulls annually
- 1,700 steers purchased from bull customers
- Inseminated 330 heifers purchased from bull customers



## Heifers

### MGA®-PG



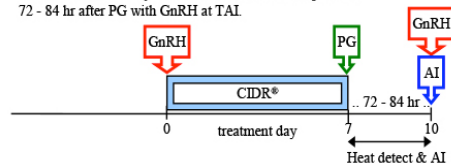
www.selectsires.com

## Heifers

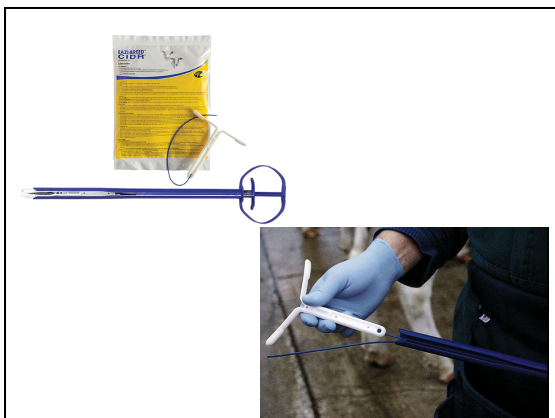
### HEAT DETECT & TIME AI (TAI)

#### Select Synch + CIDR® & TAI

Heat detect and AI day 7 to 10 and TAI all non-responders  
 72 - 84 hr after PG with GnRH at TAI



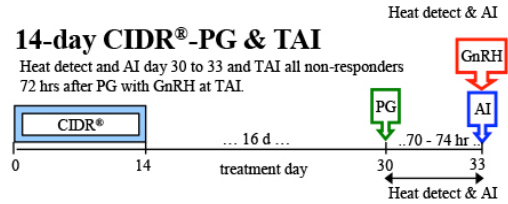
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## Heifers



## Heifers



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## Cows

### HEAT DETECTION

#### Select Synch

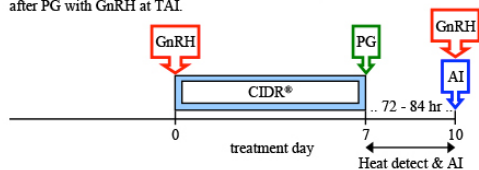


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## Cows

### Select Synch + CIDR® & TAI

Heat detect and AI day 7 to 10 and TAI all non-responders 72 - 84 hr  
 after PG with GnRH at TAI



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## Cows

- Wet 2 year old vs. Aged cow
  - Wet 2 → **36 hrs** pull 40-50%
  - Aged cow → **48 hrs** pull 40-50%

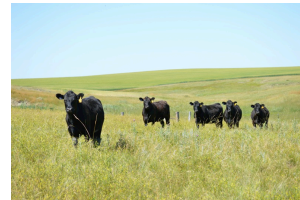


### Cows

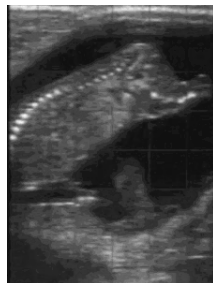
- CIDRs vs. Select Synch
  - CIDRs allow us to set up multiple group of cows in the same week
  - CIDRs allow us to breed 3.5 times the amount of cows compared to breeding on natural heats
    - With same amount of labor and time
  - Select Synch required us to heat detect prior to PG shot
    - Cheaper option but not as time efficient with multiple groups

### Cows

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle
  - Results in 77-87% of the group AI bred in 25 days
  - Range depends on of cow age
    - More challenging with young cows



### Ultrasound



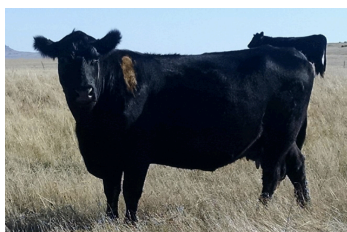
### Ultrasound

- Ibex Pro
  - Battery operated
  - Set up portable corrals and preg check where and when we need to



### Ultrasound

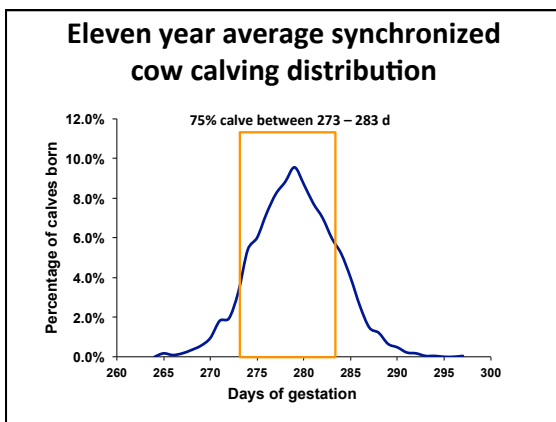
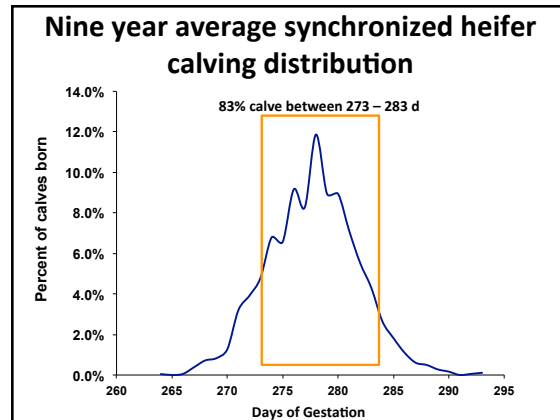
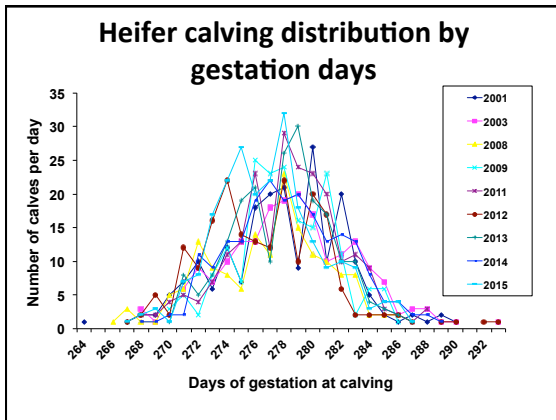
- Adding value
  - Identify late calvers to sell as breds vs. weigh-ups
  - Typically sell all bull breds



### Calving

- So does all this result in all cows calving in 2 days?





### Calving

- Example
  - If you synchronize 100 cows and 75 stick AI
    - Expect to have 7-8 calves in the peak 24 hour period

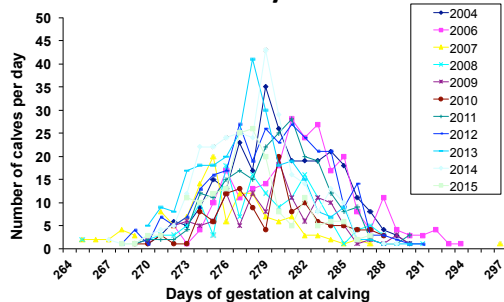


### Calving

- 50% of heifers would breed back as 3-year olds **before** we fed a balanced ration
- With proper nutrition we get 65% of heifers to breed in first cycle and additional 10% in the second cycle



### Cow calving distribution by gestation days



### Advantages of Calving Synchronized Cattle

- Limits amount of labor required
- Continual calving
  - Lose less calves because that is the focus
- Large groups of same age calves
  - Improves vaccination effectiveness
- Cows are at appropriate days post-partum to continue in our system

### Embryo Transfer

- Flushed 25-30 cows every 60 days
  - Froze embryos
- Setting up donor cows
  - Labor intensive
- Results
  - Undesirable conception rate
  - Donor cows dropped out
  - Results did not align with goals
    - Currently to expand numbers we keep more heifers to breed and AI second cycles longer

### In vitro Fertilization

- First attempt in 2015
  - Advantages
    - Keeps cows in production
    - Less labor
  - Results
    - ???



### Conclusion

- Technology allows us to be a “least cost/ value-added producer”
- Through the use of technology we have been able to expand the ranch and bring the next generation in without sacrificing



Selling private treaty bulls Feb 2016  
[www.blairbrosangus.com](http://www.blairbrosangus.com)  
605-347-1212